

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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## State Health Department Reports 48 Cases of West Nile Virus North Dakotans Urged To Take Precautions This Holiday Weekend

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Health today reported 14 new human cases of West Nile virus, bringing the statewide total to 48.

"West Nile virus is found throughout the state," said Tracy Miller, West Nile virus program manager for the Department of Health. "As people participate in upcoming outdoor fall activities such as school sporting events, Labor Day celebrations and the upcoming United Tribes International Powwow, it is still important for everyone to continue to take precautions."

To reduce the risk of being bitten by mosquitoes that carry West Nile virus, the state health department recommends the following protective measures:

- Use an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approved insect repellent (Read all instructions carefully).
- Limit outdoor activities between dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most likely to bite.
- Wear long pants and long-sleeved shirts when possible.
- Eliminate standing water around homes (e.g., buckets, flowerpots, old tires, wading pools and birdbaths).
- Keep the grass around your home trimmed.

The following is a summary of West Nile virus activity in North Dakota to date:

- Human cases 48 (Pending further investigation); Total human samples tested 855
- Positive birds 12; total birds tested 22
- Positive horses 3; total horses tested 46
- Positive mosquito pools 0; total mosquito pools tested 63

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• <u>Total</u> – 26 of the 53 counties in North Dakota have identified West Nile virus activity: Barnes, Benson, Bowman, Burleigh, Cass, Dickey, Divide, Emmons, Grand Forks, Grant, McHenry, McIntosh, McKenzie, McLean, Mercer, Morton, Mountrail, Pembina, Rolette, Sargent, Sioux, Stutsman, Traill, Walsh, Ward and Williams.

The Department of Health's West Nile virus website, <u>www.ndwnv.com</u>, will continue to be updated each Wednesday with new human, horse, bird and mosquito case information.

For additional information about West Nile virus, including free educational materials, visit <a href="https://www.ndwnv.com">www.ndwnv.com</a> or contact Tracy Miller, North Dakota Department of Health, at 701.328.2378.

-- 30 --

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